

Message

From: "Shoren Brown, Trout Unlimited" ["Shoren Brown, Trout Unlimited" <sbrown@tu.org>]
Sent: 11/9/2012 7:05:54 PM
To: Palmer Hough/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Subject: EPA releases Bristol Bay peer review report: continues open, transparent science process
Attachments: see it online; Hotspot; Hotspot; Hotspot; Hotspot; tbristol@tu.org; peer review report; The watershed assessment; peer review report; manage; opt out; Sign up; emma

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For more information: Tim Bristol, TU Alaska Program Director, tbristol@tu.org; 907-321-3291

Sportsmen welcome EPA's open and transparent process for the Bristol Bay watershed assessment

Continue to demand swift action to protect fishery, jobs, and economy after release of peer review report

Anchorage – Trout Unlimited supports the continued open and transparent process the EPA has conducted in its watershed assessment for Bristol Bay, Alaska. Today, the EPA released its peer review report of the assessment.

"With the release of today's report, the EPA is showing its continued commitment to a thorough, transparent, independent, and science-based process for protecting Bristol Bay," said Tim Bristol, TU Alaska Program Director. "The peer review report underscores what we've known all along: mining on the scope and scale of Pebble simply cannot coexist with Bristol Bay's fish. We call on President Obama to implement necessary protections for this sportsman's paradise."

Many of the respected scientists on the peer review panel found that the EPA actually understated the risks of Pebble. One reviewer said that many consequences were "likely" rather than "uncertain" when it comes to Pebble, and another confirmed that EPA evaluated a "realistic" scenario based on Pebble's extensive filings with the SEC and the Canadian government. One scientist's assessment couldn't be any more clear, "...make no mistake, we cannot have both mining and productive salmon stocks in the Bristol Bay watershed..."

"Bristol Bay is not simply a national treasure; it's the economic lifeblood for the entire region," said Brian Kraft, owner of Alaska Sportsman's and Alaska Sportsman's Bear Trail Lodges in Bristol Bay. "The EPA's assessment and peer review report recognize how Bristol Bay's sport and commercial fishing economy are wholly dependent on clean water and high quality habitat – the exact things Pebble could destroy. The bottom line is small, renewable resource-based businesses like mine cannot coexist with the Pebble Mine."

The watershed assessment also concluded that:

Bristol Bay's wild salmon fishery and other natural resources provide at least 14,000 jobs and are valued at about \$500 million annually.

The average annual run of sockeye salmon is about 37.5 million fish.

Even at its minimum size, mining the Pebble deposit would eliminate or block 55 to 87 miles of salmon streams and at least 2500 acres of wetlands – key habitat for sockeye and other fishes.

"As Pebble's backers have done throughout, they will attack the process and the EPA rather than looking at the facts," said former Republican Alaska State Senator Rick Halford. "But the fact is, the Pebble Mine is a bad deal for Alaska. Pebble will never be able to account for the many risks associated with the mine, and the peer review report makes these risks abundantly clear. The time to protect Bristol Bay is now."

The EPA began its watershed assessment in 2011 at the request of Bristol Bay-based Alaska Native tribal governments, commercial fishermen, and sport fishing businesses and organizations. The 339-page assessment recognizes Bristol Bay as a singular, unmatched global fishery for sockeye salmon and highlights the imminent threats from the proposed Pebble mine.

With the release of the peer review report, Trout Unlimited hopes that EPA will finalize its Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment soon and issue commonsense restrictions to protect Bristol Bay.

Trout Unlimited | 419 Sixth Street, Suite 200 | Juneau, AK 99801

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